


February 16, 2011

To whom it may concern,

I am here today to make a statement concerning the need for renovations of the MSU Billings science building. I am a biology student attending MSU Billings and the current classrooms and labs are in desperate need of updating. The classrooms are too small and insufficient to hold lectures. The desks are old and there is little space to perform the daily activities in the classroom. There are not enough classrooms so some lectures are held in lab rooms that have inadequate lighting and not enough room for all of the students to fit comfortably. The labs themselves lack electrical outlets so students have to pull down extension cords from the ceiling, which not only slows down productivity of the lab but brings up some safety issues. There is too little counter space and there is no storage for equipment and materials used for labs, so students have to use their laps to take notes. In the chemistry lab there are only two hoods up at the front of the class. When performing a lab that uses dangerous chemicals and requires the use of the hoods students have to wait in line making labs take longer than needed. MSU Billings science department has in the last couple of years acquired some new equipment that some of the students have no knowledge of because there just isn't enough room to make this equipment accessible to everyone with the current set up of the building. The electron scanning microscope is so isolated that it is hardly ever used and is an amazing piece of equipment. The fluorescing microscope is in a closet and only one to two students can fit in to use it. There isn't enough bench space to perform the labs; you are constantly bumping into the student next to you. Genetics lab is held in the herbarium because all the other labs with the right equipment for genetics are being used. The education of the students should take top priority and the status of the building is holding back the potential of the teaching capacity of MSU Billings. This renovation would provide an improved learning environment for the students. It would help boost enrollment for sciences at MSU Billings by drawing not only in state but out of state students due to the expanded facility. Please take into consideration what this would do not only for the science department, but for the college as a whole.

Regards,


Becky Riley